



Testimony to the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee
In Support of House Bill 5130, An Act Concerning Student Loan Forgiveness for Nonprofit Employees

Submitted by Mag Morelli, President of LeadingAge Connecticut

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LeadingAge Connecticut is a membership association representing over 130 not-for-profit organizations serving older adults across the continuum of aging services, health care, supports and housing. We are pleased to submit testimony in support of House Bill 5130, An Act Concerning Student Loan Forgiveness for Nonprofit Employees.

The workforce demand within the health care and aging services sector has now reached crisis level. The crisis is both a state and a national issue and the reasons are many. Competition from other employment sectors, pandemic exhaustion and burnout, and a professional workforce that is choosing to leave the labor market all together are just some of the reasons for this growing crisis. And, because the causation factors are many, the solution will also need to be multifaceted. Tuition reimbursement opportunities can definitely be one facet of that solution.

House Bill 5130 offers a promising proposal to assist the nonprofit aging services sector in both recruitment and retention efforts. Efforts to recruit professional staff into the non-profit sector of aging services could definitely benefit from the tuition reimbursement opportunity proposed in Section 1 of the bill. Just as importantly, the nonprofit *health care employee* loan reimbursement program, proposed in Section 2, could provide an excellent incentive and reward to offer as we strive to retain our health care professional staff who have worked throughout this pandemic with both dedication and purpose.

It is time to recognize the value of the not-for-profit sector and this proposal does just that. On behalf of the not-for-profit aging services provide members of LeadingAge Connecticut, we voice our strong support for House Bill 5130, An Act Concerning Student Loan Forgiveness for Nonprofit Employees.

Thank you for your consideration of this submitted testimony.

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